

south central Michigan continue to stress to me the importance of diversifying our Nation's energy portfolio and advancing cleaner-burning, home-grown, renewable energy sources.

This week I will introduce legislation, the Energy Independence through Bio-Diesel Act, that will continue the process of moving our country towards energy independence.

Creating a national standard for bio-diesel will encourage the technology and economies of scale necessary to make America the leader in renewable sources of energy.

The Energy Independence through Bio-Diesel Act would create a 2 percent standard for bio-diesel and amend the Clean Air Act to require that within 5 years all diesel fuel sold contains a 2 percent industry average.

Fifty-five billion gallons of diesel were consumed in 2005, and a 2 percent standard would create a 1.1-billion-gallon market. This standard will help spur the necessary investments in facilities and technological advancements needed in this alternative fuel industry.

I urge my colleagues to commit to diversifying our energy supply and lessen our dangerous dependence on foreign energy by supporting the Energy Independence through Bio-Diesel Act.

PRESIDENT BUSH'S VETO

(Mr. WALZ of Minnesota asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WALZ of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, 4 years ago today, President Bush landed for a photo opportunity on an aircraft carrier in front of a banner that said "Mission Accomplished" and declared an end to major combat in Iraq. Four years later this President refuses to even discuss the reality of a military mission that has entered its fifth year.

Yesterday the President vetoed only the second bill that has ever come to his desk. He called it a "prescription for chaos and confusion." I ask, how is that different from what we have now? He refuses to even hold the Iraqis accountable for making political, economic or diplomatic reforms that he promised and they promised to make. He's holding up funding for our troops and for our veterans.

But what exactly is the President waiting for? Now that the President has rejected our legislation, he has the responsibility to tell the American people how many more years does he expect us to stay. Do you think it will be 5? Maybe 10? And what exactly do the ground conditions look like in order to have us beginning to withdraw? Wishful thinking, political talking points and rigid ideology do not make good foreign policy.

This President was wrong when he declared an end of combat operations, and he has been consistently wrong about every single thing in Iraq. It's time that this President works with

the new Congress, elected by the majority of the American people, so that we can bring about a change to this war and truly secure America.

STOP THE POLITICAL GAMES

(Ms. FALLIN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. FALLIN. Mr. Speaker, this is a difficult time for our Nation. We are all war weary. We are all heartbroken over any loss of life, and we are all concerned about the cost of the war.

All Americans, Republicans, Democrats, and, yes, the President, want this war over as soon as possible. It's time to stop the political games and put the needs of our men and our women defending our Nation first.

The people of America want a solution to bring the troops home, but not at the expense of jeopardizing the safety and the future of our Nation. As a Nation, we must make a strong commitment and a declaration to the world that the United States will defend itself and will not tolerate terrorism, nor will we coddle terrorists or surrender or appease them.

The Commander in Chief vetoed a bill which sought to micromanage the war on terror, tie the hands of our generals, and provide a surrender date to the enemies. Congress must uphold the President's veto, set aside the cut-and-run attitude, the loser attitude, for good.

Where is the pride for the defense our Nation, the liberty and the freedoms that thousands of men and women have given their lives for in earlier years?

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. McNULTY). The Chair would remind guests in the gallery that any expression of favor or disfavor for what is said on the floor is a violation of the rules.

THINGS ARE GETTING WORSE IN IRAQ AND PRESIDENT BUSH IS NOT WILLING TO TAKE THE WAR IN A NEW DIRECTION

(Mr. PAYNE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, over this past weekend, five more American soldiers were killed in Iraq, bringing the number killed in April to over 100 U.S. soldiers. It was the deadliest month for American soldiers this year. Sadly, the total number of Americans killed now stands at 3,351, along with thousands of innocent Iraqi men, women and children.

The realities on the ground that our brave soldiers continue to face day in and day out stand in stark contrast to President Bush's pronouncement 4

years ago that major combat operations in Iraq were over.

If major operations were over 4 years ago, what have our troops been fighting the last 4 years? If indeed our mission was accomplished 4 years ago, as the banner behind the President on that aircraft carrier proclaimed, what are American troops still doing in Iraq?

If the President truly wants to bring our mission to a just conclusion, he should work with Congress instead of simply vetoing our funding bill as he did. It's now up to the President to decide if he will support accountability for Iraqis, benchmarks for success, and new direction in Iraq, for we cannot stay this course.

□ 1030

H.R. 2027, THE MILITARY PAY IMPROVEMENT ACT

(Mr. BILIRAKIS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, under current law, military pay rates must be reasonably comparable to those in the private sector with similar skills, education, and experience.

Unfortunately, due to budgetary constraints over the years, the military pay increase has not always met this criteria and a "pay gap" was created. This gap is not only unfair to our brave men and women in uniform. It also has raised retention and readiness concerns.

For this reason, I have introduced H.R. 2027, the Military Pay Improvement Act, which would give them a minimum 3.5 percent pay raise.

Our Nation's brave men and women in uniform have fought gallantly to ensure the continued safety, security, and prosperity of this great Nation. I believe it is unacceptable that we task these men and women with extraordinary responsibilities especially, during wartime, and cannot compensate them accordingly. The debt we owe them for their sacrifices can never be repaid. However, my bill will take a small step in the right direction to show our appreciation for their valor.

I urge all my colleagues to cosponsor the bill.

COMMUNICATION FROM HON. JOHN A. BOEHNER, REPUBLICAN LEADER

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Honorable JOHN A. BOEHNER, Republican Leader:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
May 1, 2007.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker, U.S. Capitol,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER PELOSI: Pursuant to clause 5(a)(4)(A) of rule X of the Rules of the House of Representatives, I designate the following Members to be available for service on investigative subcommittees of the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct during the 110th Congress: